

## News Release

# Century Old Bird Collection Finds Home at U of M Crookston

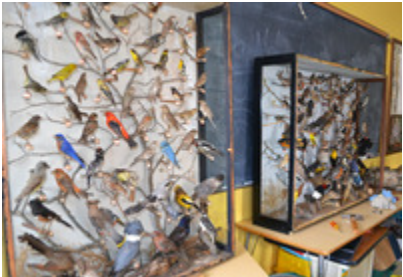
By Itollefs on Tuesday, April 1, 2014They have been migrating around the region for a century, but it looks like a unique collection

of birds has landed at the University of Minnesota Crookston. For Laura Bell, lab services coordinator in the Agriculture and Natural Resources Department and her colleagues, it was an opportunity that couldn't be passed up. An offer of the collection of nearly 200 birds will become a significant teaching tool and a distinctive addition to the campus wildlife museum. A taxidermist named Williams began the collection in 1890 and in 1914, it was passed to an East Grand Forks hotel owner for display. Over time, the birds changed hands including a transaction that took place as the result of a poker game. Eventually, East Grand Forks businessman Leonard Zimmer purchased a café that had been home to the collection. For 49 years, the collection was in storage. In 2001, when Zimmer passed away, the collection was transferred to the Wetlands, Pines, and Prairie Audubon Sanctuary. When the collection needed to be transferred again and contact was made with staff in natural resources, they went to take a look. And, within the week, the birds had come home to the campus museum located in Owen Hall.



"We now have male and female pairs of waterfowl we did not have before," Bell says. "These birds were collected while it was legal to do so, and now our students have the opportunity to learn from the real specimen as part of a collection we own. "We are grateful to have these birds and for the people who thought about our campus when considering a new home for them," Bell continues. "And, we are looking forward to sharing it with our students." Of the 200 birds in the original collection, almost all of them remain intact and in good condition. Considering the age and the history of the collection, it is remarkable that the work by this long ago taxidermist will live on. To learn

more about the collection, contact Bell at 218-281-8131. Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 29 bachelor's degree programs, 20 minors, and 36 concentrations on campus--as well as 13 degrees online--in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from more than 20 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit [www.umcrookston.edu](http://www.umcrookston.edu).



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